



**Gulf of Maine
Council on the
Marine Environment**

Working Group Briefing Packet

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Working Group agenda

Monday, June 5, 2006, Room 213, Abromson Center, Portland, ME

10:00 AM	<p>Welcome <i>Liz Hertz, ME State Planning Office and Working Group Chair</i></p>
10:10 AM	<p>Approval of consent agenda</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. March 2006 meeting summary and decision and action items - <i>Michele Tremblay, Council Coordinator</i> 2. 2006-2007 budget and financial reports (sent under separate cover) - <i>Cindy Krum, US Gulf of Maine Association</i> 3. Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership – Council project update – <i>Patricia Hinch, NS Department of Environment and Labour and Peter Wells, Environment Canada</i>, project leads 4. Committee, sub-committee, task force, and initiative reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental Quality Monitoring Committee - <i>Steve Jones, University of NH and Peter Wells, Environment Canada and EQMC Co-chairs</i> ▪ Habitat Monitoring Sub-committee - <i>Hilary Neckles, US Geological Society</i> ▪ Habitat Restoration Sub-committee - <i>Jon Kachmar, Habitat Restoration Coordinator GOMC for co-chairs Lee Swanson, NB Department of Environment and Local Government and John Catena, National Marine Fisheries Service</i> ▪ Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel - <i>Jim Straub, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation and Judith Pederson, MIT Sea Grant, Panel Co-chairs</i> ▪ Sewage Management Task Force - <i>Pat Hinch, NS Department of Environment and Labour and Peter Wells, Environment Canada</i>
10:20 AM	<p>Update on US and Canada federal-level activities <i>Joe Arbour and Maxine Westhead, Department of Oceans and Fisheries</i></p>
10:35 AM	<p>Proposed Council Response to NEGC/ECP Oceans Working Committee <i>David Keeley, Gulf of Maine Council</i></p>
11:05 AM	<p>Technology tools to facilitate decision making and Action Plan Implementation <i>Seth Barker, DIMC Co-chair; Peter Taylor, Science Translation; and Jim Cradock, me3 Technology Consultants</i></p>
11:35 AM	<p>Time for unfinished business and items removed from consent agenda</p>
12:00 PM	<p>Lunch on your own</p>
1:00 PM	<p>Climate Change meeting outcomes and direction for new Action Plan <i>Bill Burtis, Clean Air-Cool Planet and Gary Lines, Environment Canada, Climate Change Network co-chairs</i></p>
1:30 PM	<p>Linking our Rivers with the Gulf: Large Scale Diadromous Fish Habitat Restoration <i>Linda Mercer, ME Department of Marine Resources and Jon Kachmar, Staff - Restoration Subcommittee</i></p>
2:15 PM	<p>ESIP progress report and guidance for indicators and environmental reporting <i>Max Westhead, DFO and Hilary Neckles, USGS</i></p>
2:45 PM	<p>Finalizing the Action Plan <i>Liz Hertz, David Keeley, Cindy Krum, and Michele Tremblay</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Timeline for Action Plan publication – table in briefing packet (10 minutes) ▪ Review Proposed Year 1-2 Activities & 6/8/06 GOMC work session – refer to “mocked-up” Action Plan (60 minutes) ▪ Action Plan Implementation: Amending our organizational structure – terms of reference in this briefing packet (60 minutes) ▪ Concepts for dynamic Action Plan implementation (work plan development and tracking using Internet tools) (20 minutes)



5:15 PM	Adjourn
6:00 PM	Meet in Inn by the Bay lobby to go to supper as group or groups

Tuesday, June 6, 2006, 7th Floor, Glickman Library, Portland, ME

9:00 AM	<p>Implementing the Action Plan: next steps and review action items <i>Liz Hertz, David Keeley and Michele Tremblay</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brainstorm funding strategies to implement the Action Plan (20 minutes) ▪ Brainstorm on formats for jurisdictional crosswalks (20 minutes) ▪ Discuss elements of Governors and Premiers Action Plan Proclamation & Federal Statement of Support
10:00 AM	Open time – New Agenda Items/Carryover
11:45 AM	Direction to Committees for meetings
12:00 PM	Lunch on your own
1:00 PM	Time for committee meetings
3:00 PM	Adjourn for kayak outing
6:00 PM	Meet in Inn by the Bay lobby to go to supper as group or groups

Wednesday, June 7, 2006, 7th Floor, Glickman Library, Portland, ME

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Social Marketing Forum
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Wednesday, June 7, 2006, Inn by the Bay, Portland, ME

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Gulf of Maine Council Longard and Visionary Awards Ceremony and Reception
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March 2006 meeting summary and decision and action items

Algonquin Fairmont, St. Andrews, NB

Working Group members in attendance

Seth Barker, ME Department of Marine Resources; Russ Henry, NB Dept. of Agriculture, Fisheries & Aquaculture; Liz Hertz, ME State Planning Office; Larry Hildebrand, Environment Canada; Pat Hinch, NS Department of Environment and Labour; Justin Huston, NS Fisheries and Aquaculture; Marianne Janowicz, NB Department of Environment; Steve Jones, Jackson Estuarine Laboratory, UNH; Linda Mercer, ME Department of Marine Resources; Kate Killerrain Morrison, MA Office of Coastal Zone Management; Betsy Nicholson, NOAA; Ann Rodney, Oceans and Coastal Protection Unit, US EPA; Jack Schwartz, MA Division of Marine Fisheries; Kate Smukler, NOAA National Marine Protected Areas Center; Jane Tims, NB Department of Environment; Peter Wells, Environment Canada; Eric Williams, NH Department of Environmental Services; and Max Westhead, Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Others in attendance

Andrew Breau, NB Dept of Natural Resources & Energy; Karin Hansen, GOM Council; Barry Jones, Gryffyn Coastal Management Inc.; John Kachmar, ME State Planning Office; David Keeley, GOMC; Cindy Krum, USGOMA; Hilary Neckles, USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center; Theresa Torrent-Ellis, ME State Planning Office; Michele Tremblay, GOMC; and Tracy Wilson, GOMC.

Decision Items

1. PEPC requested that a member of each committee attend the Social Marketing Forum on June 7.

Action Items

1. PEPC will put together a short list of tools available to committees and distribute it.
2. PEPC will pilot the e-newsletter publication and then survey the NGO directory on the value of it.

Supporting Notes

1. **Preparing the Council work plan and budget:** Cindy Krum reported on the NOAA earmark budget and work plan that is due on May 5, 2006. The Working Group approved concept level recommendation of the NOAA work plan categories and budget and the timeline. Cindy also outlined the full council budget and work plan development. In addition she reported that a procedure for an evaluation plan would be presented to Council in June.
2. **GOM Ocean Data Partnership:** Seth Barker and Linda Mercer presented on the Partnership, of which the GOMC is a member among about 21 others. The Partnership is an international effort to promote and coordinate sharing and linking electronic dissemination and use of data round the GOM region. For more information go to www.gomoos.com, Data Partnership.
3. **NROC update** Betsy Nicholson and Russ Henry, NB Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Aquaculture presented an update on NROC. Northeast Regional Ocean Committee is the name for the US side. Canada has a different name, to be determined. The next meeting of the New England governors and Canadian premiers is scheduled for May in Newport, RI and NROC is supposed to report. The US side met in early January and determined that the top priority was to focus on energy in terms of ocean use, management, and planning. They have the go-ahead to move forward. A kick-off meeting is planned in the next six weeks. There is a lot of federal support for this in Washington. The Canadian side will meet on March 23 in Newfoundland in order to prepare for the meeting in May. The Canadian perspective is toward oil and gas and technology development but this will be worked on at the March meeting. The GOMC should consider NROC a partner but the relationship and the Council's role is still being worked out.
4. **Literacy plan, communication plan, and newsletter/bulletin:**
The possibility of a monthly e-newsletter which targets the NGO community is being researched. It would include highlights about what the Council is doing. It has been determined that the e-newsletter is an outreach and communication tool.
The Educator's Tool Kit (k-12) will be launched by the June Council meeting. There will be an opportunity for input from members of the Working Group before it is finalized. They have also applied for the highly competitive Environmental Literacy grant from NOAA.
Committees, please consult with PEPC when developing your outreach strategy so that they are being developed in a way that fits together.



The committee would like to come up with an education/communication name and asked if there was any strong objection from the WG to change the name. The WG had no objections.

5. Update on June Working Group and Council meeting and forum planning

The Working Group will meet on June 5-6. There may be a recreational opportunity for the group after the WG meeting on the 6th. The Social Marketing Forum is on June 7. In the evening there will be a reception and Awards ceremony. The Council meeting is June 8 at the Abromson Center on the USM campus. The Holiday Inn By-The-Bay is set up for lodging and the meeting space for the WG and Council meeting is to be determined.

Submitted by Tracy Wilson, Administrative Assistant

Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership Agreement - Council project update

In December, 2003, the Council agreed to establish a collaborative agreement with the Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership (BOFEP) and provide \$10,000 per year for three years to support projects and programs of mutual interest that link to the Council's Action Plan. The agreement requires BOFEP to present a annual progress report to the GOM Council.

Work completed November 2005 through June 2006 (under contract)

Three projects were selected to receive GOMC funding in 2005-06 under the GOMC-BOFEP Agreement. as follows. All projects are now complete.

- Van Proosdij, Dr. Danika, Department of Geography Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia (2006). Development of a series of historical digital mosaics depicting change in intertidal habitat in the Minas Basin. The purpose of this study was to assess and integrate all available historical aerial photography on saltmarshes within the Southern Bight of the Minas Basin, into the comprehensive digital geodatabase which had been initiated in 2004. This work compliments on-going initiatives to quantify the changes in ecosystem habitat in the Minas Basin. The air photo mosaics produced can be used by researchers to address questions of why and at what rate these changes are occurring, ideally separating the natural versus anthropogenic impacts. The final product of this project is a georeferenced rectified air photo mosaic layer for each year of available historical aerial photography at low tide, integrated into the GIS database. This database has been developed as a baseline for future research on the impacts of tidal barriers on intertidal ecosystems and is housed at St. Mary's University. The final copy of the report will be placed on the BoFEP website at: <http://www.bofep.org/>

- Sullivan, Denise (2005). Clean Annapolis River Project, Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, Annapolis Watershed Salt Marsh Evaluation: Surveying Tidal barriers along the Annapolis Basin (2005). The goal of this project was to identify, evaluate and develop restoration plans for candidate salt marshes in the Annapolis watershed. The study examined the degree and cause of tidal restriction and the size and potential biological productivity of the site including contributing factors. Sites were ranked as to their feasibility for restoration. Project outcomes include: an inventory of candidate salt marsh restoration sites in the western Annapolis Valley restoration; the identification of priority candidate sites; development of restoration plans for high priority sites; and an initiation of protocols for pre-restoration baseline monitoring of priority sites. The final report is available at: <http://www.annapolisriver.ca>

- Dr. Gail Chmura, Department of Geography, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Lessons Learned from Recovering Marshes: the Hydrological Network in Abandoned Dykelands (2006), The purpose of this project was to study vegetation distribution and production in relation to the altered hydrology documented in recovering marshes. The project assessed the responses of two recovering dykelands - John Lusby Sanctuary on the Cumberland Basin and Saints Rest March near St. John. Each marsh was compared to a reference, or control marsh, Allen Creek/Wood Point on the Upper Bay and Dipper Harbour on the lower Bay, which have never been isolated from tidal flooding. Products of this study include: a digital spatial database of hydrological networks and elevation model; maps of modern hydrological networks at four marshes; maps of original hydrological networks of two dykes marshes; and a report of analyses of hydrological differences between reference and dyked marshes in the two parts of the Bay. A final copy of the report is available at: <http://www.geog.mcgill.ca/faculty/chmura/>

Other work elements specified in the GOMC – BOFEP Agreement December 2005 through June 2006 (not funded)

The agreement requires that BoFEP:

1) "Act as the key information source for the Bay of Fundy and other northern parts of the GOM"

BoFEP Science Workshop Series:

- BoFEP is currently organizing the 7th Bay of Fundy Science Workshop "Challenges in environmental management in the Bay of Fundy-Gulf of Maine" Oct 25-27, 2006, The Fairmount Algonquin, St. Andrews, NB
Purpose: to maximize opportunities for exchange and dissemination of scientific information among partners.
Discussion topics: biodiversity/ecology (incl. but not limited to research activities within the Discovery Corridor, near-to offshore environments); integrated coastal management/ ecosystem approaches (incl. fisheries); nearshore fish community structure/habitat; salt marsh ecology; environmental/science education outreach programs, and nearshore marine monitoring.

Communications:

- BoFEP publishes a quarterly Fundy Tidings BoFEP Newsletter. The current issue for March 2006 and back issues are available at: <http://www.bofep.org/tidings.htm> and
- prepares online popular articles on current Bay of Fundy topics. Further information is available at: <http://www.bofep.org/articles.htm>
- maintains and develops the BoFEP website providing a wealth of continually updated information on the Bay of Fundy
- developed information Kiosks and posters for distribution in selected areas around the Bay of Fundy
- prints and distributes BoFEP reports regionally and internationally
- makes presentations to agencies and the public on BoFEP and its objectives
- continues to distribute BoFEP publications to libraries
- members of BoFEP meet regularly with the GOMC Working Group to present results of BoFEP projects and workshops.
- prepares and distributes a quarterly e-newsletter "Fundy Tidings" to all BoFEP members and other interested individuals
- created and sponsored a display on saltmarshes entitled "From Habitat to habitat" originally presented as a temporary exhibit at the O'Dell Museum in Annapolis Royal. Currently the display is being upgraded as a permanent display to be housed in the Interpretation Center at the Annapolis Royal Historic Gardens as part of their Saltmarsh and Acadian history interpretation program;
- currently is preparing Fundy Issue #28 on The Avon River Causeway.

2) "Contribute to the scientific understanding of the Bay of Fundy ecosystem through research and programs on contaminants and habitat restoration including new research projects such as a GIS study of tidal barriers in the Bay of Fundy"

Reports

- Dyer, C, S. Wehrell and Dr. G. Daborn (2005). Acadia University, Acadia Centre for Estuarine Research, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Fisheries Management Issues in the Upper Bay of Fundy. ACER Publication NO. 80. Available at: http://www.bofep.org/PDFfiles/Final_ReportUBFFMPPJuly05.pdf

Publications

- Fundy Issue #27: Parlous POPs; Persistent Organic Pollutants in the Bay of Fundy (available on the BoFEP Website at <http://www.bofep.org/pops.htm>)
- Perry-Giraud, Christian (2005). Thirty Year Assessment of the Cornwallis Estuary Evolution: Aerial Photograph and GIS Analysis. Report on an Internship project for the Minas Basin Working Group by Christian Perry-Giraud, Master "Environment, Ground and Water", University of Rouen, France September 2005. 65 pages. Available at: http://www.bofep.org/PDFfiles/GISCornwallis_PerryGiraud.pdf
- J..A. Percy, A.J. Evans, P.G. Wells, and S.J. Rolston Eds. (2005). Proceedings of the 6th Bay of Fundy Workshop, "The Changing Bay of Fundy: Beyond 400 Years", held September 29-October 2, 2004, Cornwallis, NS. Environment Canada - Atlantic Region Occasional Report No. 23. March 2005. Available at: http://www.bofep.org/PDFfiles/COASTAL_FORUM_WORKSHOP_RPT.pdf

Working Group Activities

Minas Basin Working Group:

- developing a comprehensive environmental management plan for the Minas Basin (ongoing)
- developing a specific framework for preparing periodic State of the Bay of Fundy Reports (ongoing);
- met with municipal and regional planners around the Minas basin to consider ways of encouraging planners to consider coastal ecosystem and watershed implications of their activities and to develop appropriate planning tools.

Salt Marsh and Rehabilitation Working Group:

- compiling an inventory and audit of existing tidal barriers, and identifying potential salt marsh rehabilitation projects (see Dr. Danika van Proosdij reports above).

Sublittoral Ecology and habitat Conservation Working Group:

- disseminating information on sublittoral ecology and habitat conservation in the Outer Bay of Fundy to decision-makers, other researchers and the public through development of a systematic method for synthesis of relevant data and information;
- examining approaches and methods for indicating areas of high ecological value requiring protection;
- conducted a survey to document research capabilities of individuals and groups involved in benthic habitat and ecological process research in the region to assess the capacity to address emerging regional initiatives.



Corophium and Mudflat Ecology Working Group:

- continues to summarize and make available existing information/knowledge on the biology and ecology of *Corophium* spp. identify key research questions and approaches, especially ecological models; facilitates research opportunities and mechanisms for cooperative research
- working on a monograph on *Corophium volutator* in the Bay of Fundy and a comprehensive bibliography the species. (A compilation of more than 600 citations has been prepared by the *Corophium* Working Group of BOFEP. Draft is available only in hard copy. (Contact: communications@bofep.org)

Defining Stress and Cumulative Effects Working Group:

- conducting studies on the cumulative effects of heavy metals on salmon

Fundy Biosphere Working Group:

- promoting the concept of establishing an ecosystem reserve at the head of the Bay of Fundy
- collecting scientific and empirical data relative to the uniqueness of the area in support of this initiative.

Upper Bay of Integrated Fisheries Management Working Group:

- working with DFO to develop a pilot project for an integrated Fisheries Management Plan for the Upper Bay of Fundy;
- received project funding from the EJLB Foundation to produce a report entitled "Fisheries Management Issues in the Upper Bay of Fundy. A final report is available at:
http://www.bofep.org/PDFfiles/Final_ReportUBFFMPPJuly05.pdf

Fundy Informatics Working Group

- recently formed to identify ways to facilitate the dissemination of, and efficient online access to, existing scientific and other information about the Bay of Fundy and coordinate its efforts with similar informatics initiatives of the Gulf of Maine Council to avoid duplication and ensure that projects are functionally integrated as much as possible.
- developing a number of projects designed to facilitate online access to information about the Bay of Fundy including BoFEPs various publications, bibliographies and working group reports. Made a presentation to the March 2006 GOM Working Group meeting in Halifax to introduce the Working Group, report on activities, and begin to explore opportunities for collaboration.

Eel Grass Working Group:

- recently formed to support and facilitate collaboration, networking and information exchange regarding eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) in the Bay of Fundy and elsewhere in eastern Canada.

Other activities:

Ecosystem Status reporting

- BoFEP members continued to work with both DFO and GOMC on the development of a framework for periodic State of the Bay of Fundy reporting. DFO was working on Ecosystem Overview and Assessment reports (EOA) and the GOMC, on indicators and reporting under ESIP (Ecosystem Indicators Partnership). BoFEP contributed substantially to developing a working framework for describing stressors and effects on the Fundy environment for the EOA reports (Section 8). There is continued input through conference calls, meetings and reviews of documents both for the development of the Strategy for Gulf of Maine indicators and State of Environment reports.
- BoFEP also provided ESIP with considerable reference material on indicators to permit the development of the strategic document together with its framework for linking indicators, monitoring, reporting and management actions.
- BoFEP members continue to work on several initiatives resulting from the 2004 Summit process including working on the Contaminants Working Group of ESIP and keeping current with the science of monitoring, the choice of suitable indicators and the process of developing state of the environment reports.

Gulf of Maine Summer Institute

- BoFEP has provided funding in support of the Gulf of Maine Summer Institute 2006 in Cornwallis.

3) "Expand BOFEP to include more US representatives; BOFEP continues to welcome the participation of US representatives in BOFEP Working Groups and workshops "

- US representatives of USEPA, University of Maine, the Island Institute, Texas A&M University, Suffolk University and Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences, made presentations during the 6th BOFEP Workshop. Individuals making these presentations are now members of BOFEP; and
- The Planning Committee for the 7th BOFEP Workshop, St. Andrews, NB, Oct 25-27, 2006 intends that the workshop be cross boundary in nature. US representatives will be invited to participate on the program committee.



4) “Promote effective communication and information exchange between GOMC and BOFEP members, and cross-link information sources such as web sites, displays, and joint fact sheets”

- BOFEP and GOMC maintain open communications and exchange information on issues of concern throughout the Gulf of Maine/Bay of Fundy coastal, marine and watershed;
- BOFEP website is cross linked to the Gulf of Maine Council website;
- BOFEP displays and information materials have been on exhibit at the GOM Summit (Oct. 2004), GOM Visionary awards ceremony (Jan.2005) GOM WG meeting (March 2005, June 2005) and Council meeting (June 2005).
- BoFEP members continue to collaborate, serve and support the work of the GOMC through participation of its members from NB and NS, on the GOMC Working Group, Environmental Quality Monitoring Committee; Sewage Task Force; and Habitat Conservation, Restoration (Cheverie Creek Project), and Monitoring committees, ESIP, and 2004 Summit followup activities.

5) “Provide consultation and scientific advice on issues of importance to the Council”

- BOFEP has continued to make presentations and participated as members of the GOMC Working Group, Committees, Task Forces, and panels. BOFEP members continue provide advice on issues and priorities of concern throughout the Gulf of Maine from a Canadian perspective.

Recommended action: For information only.

Submitted by Patricia Hinch, NS Department of Environment and Labour

Environmental Quality Monitoring Committee

The main activities of the EQMC in 2006 are related to the 2005 field season, the 9-year review and networking of GOM monitoring programs.

FIELD SAMPLING AND TISSUE ANALYSIS

The mussel tissue samples collected during the 2005 field season have been processed and transferred across the border to the respective analytical labs. Extra samples have been stored in archives. The organic contaminant analyses will again be conducted at the Environment Canada Lab in Moncton, NB, and will include analysis of alkylated PAHs, a new suite of analyses begun with the new 12-year monitoring design. The trace metal analyses will be conducted by Battelle once again. The results for the metals analyses will be available in June, the organics analysis process is underway and results are expected in November.

9-YEAR REPORT

The 9-year review is being finalized through the efforts of several EQMC members, the co-chairs and Louise White. The last remaining data analysis tasks are underway, the unfinished chapters are being written, and the completed chapters are being edited by other expert authors.

MONITORING INVENTORY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING COORDINATOR

A UNH contractor has been hired to enhance the existing Monitoring Inventory of programs around the GOM and to manage the migration of key entries in the inventory into the Global Change Master Directory (GMCD). This task will be completed in June, 2006.

A new job description for the Environmental Monitoring Coordinator is being written in cooperation with the Habitat Committee. The person hired will share responsibilities between the committees.

PRESENTATIONS

Several presentations of the Gulfwatch results and program have been made at scientific meetings, including SETAC 2005 (poster); ATW 2005 (talk by Louise White). Planned presentations include SETAC North Atlantic Chapter 2006 June, SETAC in Montreal, Nov 2006; 7th BoFEP Workshop, Oct. 2006.

INTERACTION WITH OTHER GROUPS

EQMC members have provided significant input into the ESIP (Ecosystem Indicators Partnership) initiative and discussions about monitoring and indicators for the GOM. These efforts have included providing input to and review of the ESIP Indicators report by Kathy Mills.

Peter Wells has provided input into the ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea) Marine Chemistry Working Group, through Robin Law of the UK's CEFAS Burnham Laboratory. They requested in March and Peter sent them a complete data file of the Gulfwatch data, as well as all relevant papers and reports, which they will use in a comparative exercise with their own NE Atlantic mussel chemical contaminant data. This group is highly esteemed re environmental chemistry methods and monitoring data; this linkage, at their request, reflects really well upon the EQMC and the Council. Reciprocal data and report exchanges are anticipated.

Members of the committee have also been involved in assisting with and reviewing sections of the 5-yr GOMC action plan for 2006-2011. Several EQMC members have been working with the Council's Sewage Task Force.

Submitted by Steve Jones, University of NH and Peter Wells, Environment Canada and EQMC Co-chairs

Habitat Monitoring Sub-committee

The Habitat Monitoring Subcommittee is making good progress toward a pilot web- and spatially-enabled data system for regional habitat monitoring data. This project is funded by a GOMC internal grant to the HMSC and DIMC, with additional contributions from NOAA and GOMC web development funds. The data system will include online, standardized data entry, centralized data storage, and synthesis and dynamic visual display of coastal and estuarine habitat monitoring results. Project collaborators held a kickoff meeting in January 2006 to define the scope and vision for the data system. The project's technical team has now produced a set of web specifications and will soon begin work on database development. This "proof-of-concept" will provide regional synthesis and display of salt marsh and seagrass vegetation monitoring data. This initial product will be flexible in design to accommodate future expansion. Thus it will serve as a spring board for a complete regional habitat monitoring data system including additional indicators (e.g. hydrology and faunal indicators) and other habitats (e.g. nearshore soft bottom subtidal environments). Project partners include the Gulf of Maine Ocean Observing System (Tom Shyka, Eric Bridger), Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve (Ray Konisky), Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (Tim Smith, Marc Carullo), University of New Hampshire (Fred Short), GOMC DIMC (Seth Barker), GOMC Science Translation (Peter Taylor), and USGS (Hilary Neckles).

The HMSC is collaborating with EQMC on hiring a contract coordinator to jointly serve these subcommittees/committees. This position grew out of two discussions at the March 2006 Working Group meeting: 1) staff support is needed to help implement GOMC action items; and 2) there is a desire to integrate the Council's monitoring activities. We will build this new position description and scope of services around a subset of needs of each group that is common to environmental quality and habitat monitoring and could be met by the skills of a single individual. Specific tasks will focus on individual needs of HMSC and EQMC as well as coordination between groups. A contract will start as early as July 1 with the opportunity for annual renewal. For the first six months of the contract, HMSC will use 20%-25% of the contractor's time. This will step up to 40% for HMSC during the second six months of the contract. This phased implementation will allow EQMC to finish some reports in progress, while giving HMSC time to build a meaningful scope of services. It is envisioned that the position would then be a 60% (EQMC) - 40% (HMSC) or 50% - 50% split on into the future, as dictated by specific needs.

The HMSC continues to work with the GOMC Science Translation contractors and the Habitat Restoration Subcommittee on finalizing a booklet about salt marsh values, restoration, and monitoring. Current plans are to make the booklet available as a pdf file for downloading until printing funds are found.

Submitted by Hilary Neckles, US co-chair



Habitat Restoration Sub-committee

The GOMC/NOAA Habitat Restoration Partnership has awarded the following grant for 2006:

Applicant	State/ Province	Project Name	Grant Amount
Association to Preserve Cape Cod	MA	Salt Marsh Restoration Monitoring, Cape Cod	\$10,000
Marine Biological Laboratory	MA	A Community Effort to Restore Sea Clams to Cape Cod	\$37,027
Salem Sound Coastwatch	MA	Phragmites australis Eradication Pilot Project	\$11,956
Town of Yarmouth	MA	Bass Creek Salt Marsh Restoration Project	\$50,000
Town of Orleans	MA	Little Namskaket Creek Salt Marsh Restoration Project	\$70,000
Town of Newbury	MA	Old Town Hill and Newman Road Salt Marsh	\$30,500
Town of Duxbury	MA	Island Creek Rainbow Smelt and Herring Run Restoration	\$50,000
New Hampshire Dept of Transportation	NH	Taylor River Dam Feasibility Study	\$62,000
University of New Hampshire	NH	Restoration Seminar II and Baseline Data Collection at Addison, Maine	\$10,000
Winnegance Alewife Commission	ME	Fishway Improvements / Winnegance Lake Outlet	\$20,000
Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve	ME	Drakes Island Salt Marsh Monitoring and Management	\$15,000
Ducks Unlimited Canada	NB	Musquash Marsh Restoration Monitoring	\$20,000
		Total	\$386,483

GOM Barrier Removal Monitoring Workshop

The Habitat Restoration Subcommittee has organized a workshop for discussion of the development of barrier removal monitoring protocols for the Gulf of Maine. This workshop is by invitation only and will be held at the University of Maine in Orono on June 20-21. Discussions will focus on monitoring needs related to barrier removal (culverts, dams, etc.) including fish, hydrology and hydraulics, sediment, In-stream wetland, and riparian wetland. Practitioners with experience in the identified topics will develop draft parameters necessary for properly monitoring the impacts of barrier removal. It is anticipated that this effort will eventually lead to standardized monitoring protocols for removals within the Gulf of Maine region. The Subcommittees current work plan is focusing on river restoration efforts, including assistance from the Public Education and Participation Committee and the Science Translators.

Ongoing GOMC/NOAA Partnership Efforts

Members of the GOMC/NOAA Habitat Restoration Partnership are currently planning to develop a grant application to NOAA for another 3-year partnership. We are currently in our 2nd year of the 2nd 3-year partnership for restoring coastal habitat in the GOM. The grant is due in October 2006 and would provide funding from through 2009, provided annual appropriations are available from NOAA, if we are successful in obtaining the grant. The grant application will focus on continuing to provide habitat restoration grants as well as offering recommendations for enhancement to improve the effectiveness of the program.

Full Habitat Committee Meeting

The full GOMC Habitat Committee will meet on June 6th from 1:00-3:00 at during the Working Group meeting in Portland. The Committee will meet in the same room that the Working Group meets in at the Abromson Center at the University of Southern Maine. The Committee consists of the co-chairs of the Restoration Subcommittee, Monitoring Subcommittee, Conservation Subcommittee and the GOM Mapping Initiative. This meeting will focus on several agenda items that have been solicited from various subcommittee members.

Submitted by Jon Kachmar, Maine State Planning Office/Maine Coastal Program



Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel

November 2005 and May 2006 Panel meetings

The November 2005 meeting was held at the Stoweflake Resort and Conference Center in Stowe, VT. The meeting included a Steering Committee retreat to finalize the review and branding policy and to explore the Panel's expanding role in regional ANS activities. The Panel is honored to host the ANSTF meeting and field trips, in conjunction with its own meeting, in Hyannis, Massachusetts.

Outreach initiatives

Website revision

In 2004, the Panel received an Internal Grant Program (IGP) award from its host organization, the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment. The grant funds paid for a consultant to work with the Panel's Web Revision Team and to implement changes. Mike Hauser, NEANS Panelist representing the VT Department of Conservation, led the effort and donated many hours of hands-on time to create the new look for the website. The website "went live" at the beginning of 2006 and continues to be updated and expanded.

Social-based marketing approach to behavioral change workshop

In 2005, the NEANS Panel applied for an IGP through the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment. The proposal includes contracting with a social-based marketing expert to design and conduct a workshop to bring together invasive species leaders to discuss how to achieve behavioral changes and work together on a regional approach to implement it. If funded, the workshop would be held in conjunction with the Panel's November 2006 meeting in Maine.

NEANS Panel brochure

The Panel has completed the revision of its fact sheet. The new version is formatted as a tri-folded brochure and includes an overview of regional ANS issues and Panel background information.

Internal policies

The Panel is drafting a five-year retrospective. This is the first step in its next effort: developing an action plan to guide its work for the next five years. The Panel continues its work on a development strategy. Recognizing that the Panel's plans exceed its base funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Panel's ANS Program Manager drafted a menu of support mechanisms with an explanation of each would work and recommendations to implement them.

About the NEANS Panel

The Northeast Regional Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel (NEANS Panel) of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force was approved in July 2001. The NEANS Panel is comprised of the states of Maine, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont as well as the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Québec. The Panel looks forward to working with the provinces of Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Submitted by Michele L. Tremblay, NEANS Panel ANS Program Manager

Sewage Management Task Force

An application under the GOM Internal Grants Funding Program was submitted jointly by the GOM Sewage Management Task Force and Environmental Quality Monitoring Committee, in August 2005. The application was approved by the Internal Grants Review Team in November 2005 to receive 7K USD. The Passamquoddy Tribe and USEPA provided an additional \$12K US to match the contribution received from the GOMC, for a project total of \$19K US, to hire a contractor to conduct specific tasks. The contract requires the contractor to complete the following:

1. Design and implement a jurisdictional survey and conduct interviews of Sewage Task Force members and regulatory agency representatives in each GOM jurisdiction, to collect information on jurisdictional status, achievements, progress and activities on on-site wastewater management. The report would include information on management approaches, jurisdictional policies, legislation, regulations, issues of concern, emerging issues, challenges, information gaps, research needs, technologies, best management practices, reference materials, publications, issues of concern and specific questions for future investigation.
2. Work with the GOM Public Education and Participation Committee to develop the framework of a public communications/outreach plan (including a standard approach and process) to disseminate documents, reports, key messages, and notices of the Sewage Task Force, adopting/adapting/building on current GOMC outreach and communications procedures and practices.
3. Work with the GOM EQM Committee to select known sewage indicators by which to evaluate the environmental and human health quality of receiving waters, for consideration in GOM/Bay of Fundy monitoring programs, including GulfWatch, and prepare a report to discuss the rationale behind the selection of the chosen sewage indicators.
4. Produce a reference/resource document from information gathered from the jurisdictional survey and from interview responses, for internal Sewage Task Force use only.
5. Prepare a detailed draft outline of a workshop program for a proposed GOMC hosted workshop in 2007 or forum or session of the Aquatic Toxicity Workshop (Oct 2007), based on input from Sewage Task Force members to reflect their interests.
6. Prepare a technical report on current best management practices and proven wastewater management technologies for on-site systems in the Gulf Region and provide examples of other innovative technologies applied /under consideration or development throughout the world, that could be applied in the Gulf region.
7. Prepare a dissemination plan for the distribution of the Best Management Practices and Innovative Technologies report to selected industries, municipal, state, and provincial agencies in the Gulf of Maine.
8. Set aside relevant information materials collected for the best management practices report, for the future development of a factsheet for public distribution, on best management practices.

Status: The Task Force contracted Dr. Donald Waller, P. Eng., Halifax, NS, to conduct the contract work described above. To date, Dr. Waller has completed a draft communications plan, and has designed and distributed the jurisdictional survey to appropriate regulatory agencies for response by June 21st, 2006. He is currently conducting a literature review and is working with members of the EQMC to identify appropriate indicators of sewage and its constituents, for consideration under the GulfWatch Monitoring Program.

Recommended Action: Relevant regulatory departments in each jurisdiction are encouraged to assist Dr. Waller by: providing relevant jurisdictional information, completing the jurisdictional survey (which will provide background information for the on-site best management practices document); and participating in reviews of all draft documents and reports prepared under this contract.

Submitted by Patricia Hinch, NS Department of Environment and Labour and Sewage Management Task Force Co-chair

ESIP Progress report and guidance for indicators and environmental reporting

Background

In October 2005 Lucia Fanning (ESIP co-chair) made a presentation to the Working Group at our meeting in Halifax. In December the Council received an ESIP presentation, had a brief discussion and asked the Working Group to offer recommendations at the June Council meeting. At our January meeting in St. Andrews you each received a hardcopy of the Strategy and subsequently an electronic version.

Status

Over the past six-months the following was accomplished:

- The 50-page GoM Indicators and Reporting Strategy (funded by the GoMC) was finalized by the contractor (Kathy Mills). Comments from the GoMC Working Group and ESIP members have been considered and incorporated. Attached are a three page executive summary and the proposed ESIP Terms of Reference.
- A second report that assesses user needs was completed. Over 100 Canadian and US end-users were interviewed and two focus groups were held to assess the Tides of Change Report and document the specific needs in the GoM for indicator and reporting products. This foundational work was incorporated into the Strategy and will guide ESIP as it develops and grows the indicator and reporting effort.
- ESIP completed a competitive process that produced 10+ Canadian and US applicants for the position of ESIP Program Manager. Dr. Ray Konisky has accepted a 1-year contract (full-time contract position) and will begin on June 5th. A one year
- A substantial proposal worth \$300K US was developed and funding was approved through GeoConnections, a Canadian funding organization. The Gulf of Maine Council is the applicant and the Gulf of Maine Ocean Observing System (GoMOOS) will be the Technical Program Manager. GoMOOS is providing nearly \$60,000 of staff time to this initiative. There is also collaboration with various federal agencies and universities.
- The project will involve significant data discovery, analysis, metadata documentation and data provider partnership agreements; and web tool prototyping, testing and development, and deployment. By the fall of 2007 we will have new geospatial tools that allow users to manipulate contaminants and nutrient data over the web and the data to populate related indicators.
- The US Geological Survey has designated Susan Russell-Robinson to serve as an ESIP co-chair. Max Westhead also now serves as the DFO co-chair and the EPA co-chair was changed to Charlie Strobel. NOAA's co-chair remains Gary Matlock and EC is in the process of replacing Lucia Fanning. Natural Resources Canada has been approached to participate, however a decision is still pending.
- Council committees and the Working Group have developed indicator and environmental reporting activities for inclusion in the 2006-2011 Action Plan and directed ESIP to perform the work.

Action Requested

ESIP requests Working Group action on the following:

1. **Accept the GoM Ecosystem Indicators and Reporting Strategy and recommend Council adoption of it as a guidance document** – In December the Council requested the Working Group to review the Strategy and to offer a recommendation on whether and how to proceed with implementation of an indicators and environmental reporting initiative. While the Strategy is quite extensive the key implications of Council adoption include:
 - Being an outspoken advocate and making a long-term commitment to implement and maintain an ecosystem indicators and state of the environment reporting program;
 - Assisting public and private entities to apply the indicators and reporting products in their decision-making processes;
 - Joining with other partners to allocate resources on a routine basis that are necessary to implement an ecosystem monitoring, indicators and reporting program; and
 - Providing ongoing input to ensure consistency with GOMC priorities.The essence of Council adoption is that it will have a guidance document that describes how the region will develop and implement an indicators and reporting effort. The subsequent development of annual work plans and budgets will be reviewed and acted on by the Council.
2. **Review and recommend adoption of the ESIP Terms of Reference** – The Strategy recommends that ESIP be a standing committee of the Council. The attached Terms of Reference provide some detail on the future relationship between the Council and ESIP.

Submitted by Max Westhead, Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Hilary Neckles, US Geological Survey

Finalizing the Action Plan

Please note that structural and other documents are in this section of the briefing packet. Action Plan documents are in a separate file as a "mocked up" Plan and are downloadable (along with this document) on the Council website.

Timeline for Action Plan publication

Timing	Task	Deliverable	Responsible Entity
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyze AP Survey Monkey and Barry Jones survey results ▪ Email thank-you to respondents ▪ GOMC Ad-hoc group is consulted ▪ Photo op for Gov & Pre (May 11-13) ▪ Draft Gov/Pre & Fed statement 	3-5 page assessment email Conference call Photo Draft	Michele Michele Liz Michele Michele, David, Larry & Betsy
June	Present Goals, Outcomes, Table of Contents, schedule, and delegate to CAPAG to finish final plan Present Structural Recommendations Set Year 1-2 Priority Activities	PowerPoint and discussion 2-page memo Handout	Don/Liz/Michele David David
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete writing the Plan ▪ Complete jurisdictional crosswalks ▪ Convene CAPAG call 	Final Action Plan 2-pages for each jurisdiction (9) Review Plan	David, Michele, Peter Russ
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secure signatures on Proclamation 	Proclamation	Michele
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Final editing and layout of Plan & brochure ▪ Create web presence/tools ▪ Finalize 5-year review/retrospective ▪ CAPGAG call 	Web tools 5-7 page report	Peter, Ethan Peter Michele & Ethan Russ
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working Group meeting ▪ Present draft Work Plan ▪ Print 5-year retrospective 		Michele Cindy, Michele Michele
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Print AP & brochure & implement marketing strategy 		Printer



Self-assessment – Issues and Responses

The Council, Working Group and Committees provided their self-assessment on the way we are organized and offered insights on how to improve the way we do our business¹. This is a synthesis of that material. Implementation of the improvements will be phased-in between June 2006 and June 2007 based on the ranking assigned to each item. (see Ranking Scheme at end of document)

Council Issues/Problems	Examples	Possible Responses Offered in Surveys	Rank
Focus on minutia to detriment of policy – as the Council's scope and level of available resources grew there were not commensurate increases in the mechanisms to manage the work. One result is quality Council and WG time is dedicated to details that can be better addressed elsewhere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council & WG discuss detailed budgets ▪ Scope of Consent Agenda items is too broad/wrong level ▪ Interim programmatic discussions are brought to Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elevate discussions, share creative approaches, be action-oriented, and focus on issues requiring regional response ▪ Make meetings productive w/sense of importance ▪ Consolidate decision-making on programmatic, personnel and budget issues with accountability within Management and Finance 	1
			3
			1
Linkage to Governors and Premiers – the linkage between the Governors/Premiers is weak and council members are not fully engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council member participation is spotty ▪ Inconsistent Councilor support & allocation of resources ▪ Limited public relations with jurisdictions ▪ Hard to measure our progress on issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better track progress, make outcomes measurable, disseminate routine communication products (e.g., Annual Report, e-news, etc.), & raise profile/make a name for the Council ▪ Make opportunities happen & engage the media ▪ Pursue "signature activities"² & distribute cogent statements of what Council does ▪ Make economic-environmental linkage clear ▪ Address G/P once a year at summer meeting 	2
			3
			2
			3
			3
Expand participation – some important partners with coastal and marine mandates in 5-year Plan are not participating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited participation by business, NGO & science community ▪ Perceived as inward looking/closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarify expectations and expand size of Council ▪ Ensure key agencies are participating ▪ Engage others back home on Council issues 	1
			2
			3
Better support Council decision-making – meetings are process-oriented and materials can better enable consensus decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GOMC meetings focus on process vs. actions ▪ Connect briefing materials with options ▪ Limited new member orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better support/train GOMC members to be active ▪ Engage Councilors in designing meetings with themes (avoid scattershot) & lead by them ▪ Better serve member needs (e.g., PR, projects, etc.) 	3
			1
			2

WG/Committee Issues & Problems	Examples	Possible Responses	
"Side of the desk/collateral duties" – few people have the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Difficulty in securing approval to participate at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase GOMC staff capacity and make operation more professional 	2

¹ Coon Council survey 11/05, Working Group via Survey Monkey fall 2005, committee survey 2004 , 39% of the WG and Committee members that responded to the survey indicated "they were satisfied with the current present structure". 50% indicated that "current project and contract management is successful".

² Support planning, research and activities that address land-based impacts on the marine environment; issue state of the environment reports, indicators and report-cards/regional score card; communicate on gulf-wide issues with common language; sustainable development activities; data and information management; biennial research/state of the knowledge conference or annual managers conference; ecosystem restoration; annual awards for progressive businesses; personnel exchange;



policy direction to make their work on implementing the Council's 5-year Plan a priority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> home & at meetings Competing needs at home take precedence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve contract management by allocating more of these tasks to paid contractors 	2
Volunteer commitment – it is difficult to hold people that volunteer their time accountable to produce materials and meet schedules.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely completion of annual work plans is unusual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use WG/Committee members for policy and strategic assessment, and move daily management tasks to paid staff and Management & Finance 	1
Coordination – internal coordination is insufficient among all entities of the Council and externally with our partners and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple habitat efforts are not sufficiently coordinated Interaction between WG & Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop integrated annual work plans Invest in enhanced staff support to make linkages Promote interaction through joint staff & committee meetings Support “roundtable discussions” for sharing 	2 1 2 3
Flatten organizational structure – the organization's committee structure is not efficient, too expansive and under-supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plethora of committees, task forces and panels with unclear mandates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide staff support to all committee co-chairs Consolidate committee structure Make committees more efficient/productive Aggressively recruit diverse committee members 	1 1 2 3

Policy Issues/Problems	Examples	Possible Responses	
Scope – the policy scope has expanded but limited resources adversely affect the quality of the work (e.g., inch-deep and a mile-wide). Some Council activities do not require or significantly benefit from a regional response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inability to say no to a good idea Get involved in sub-regional issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharpen Council statement of purpose Create 5-year Plan tasks that contribute to state & provincial decision-making Pursue fewer issues and provide greater resources 	1 1 1
Follow-through – the degree of follow-through and application/use of Council products is mixed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Products without advance distribution plan Councilors unable to say how products were used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate user application and report on products Ensure jurisdictional commitment exists before pursuing a project 	2 2
Jurisdictional priorities – need to make a more overt linkage between Council and jurisdictional coastal/marine priorities and actively report on progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appearance GOMC tasks are “more work” vs. complimentary to mandates Limited support for regional agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show relevance of Council mission to agency mandates Annually report-out on linkages & enable participants to communicate results 	1 3

Funding Issues/Problems	Examples	Possible Responses	
Build capacity – the Council relies on partnerships to implement the 5-year Plan but under-invests in building the capacity of key partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Summit recommendation is to build capacity & enable others to perform Perception of taking credit for others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus funding on capacity building tasks Support NGO participation in GOMC tasks Invest in partnerships that leverage funds and results Enable GPAC-like efforts 	3 3 2 3

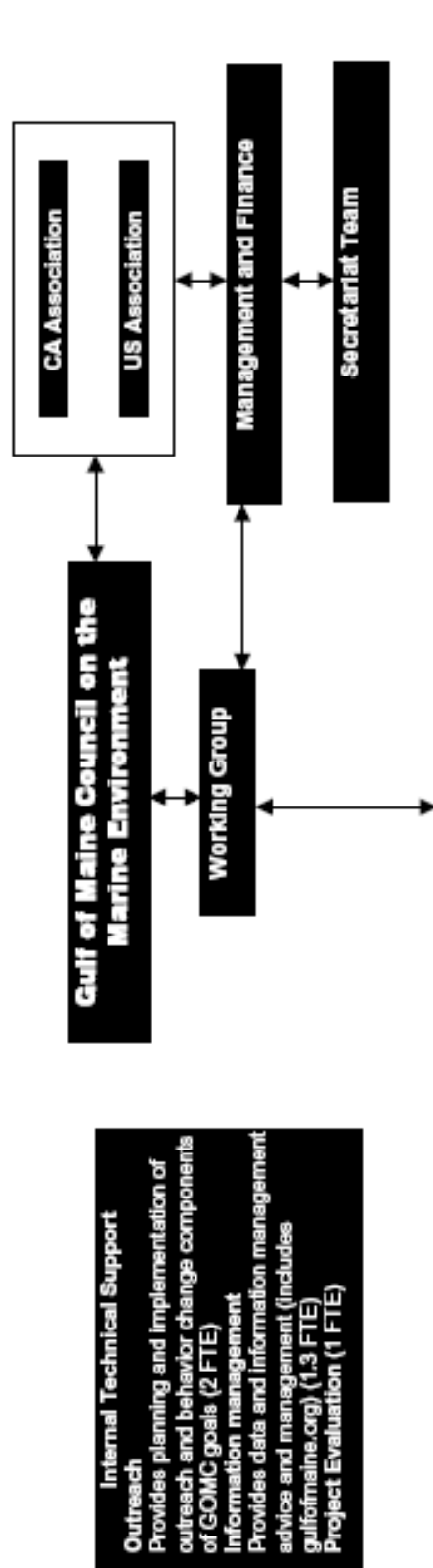


<p>Diversify funding sources – over reliance on a single US funding source makes the Council's work too vulnerable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ US governments provides over 90% of the resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Propose products relevant to Canadian funding agencies 	2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Require significant match to secure GOMC funds 	2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make GOMC agenda relevant (e.g., tangible deliverables, etc.) to others w/funds 	1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better access existing competitive funding sources (e.g., NBETF, Foundations, etc.) for large-scope initiatives 	3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grow senior management commitment – resources will follow 	1

1 = **Urgent** – to be initiated immediately

2 = **Timely and Important** – to be acted on in next 6 months

3 = **Important** – to be acted on later in the year



Committees		Subcommittees		Activities		Support	
Habitat Sub-committee co-chairs coordinate Goal 1 activities and sub-committees	Conservation [Habitat] Monitoring Restoration	Goal 1 – #4 activities Goal 1 – #2, 3 and 4 activities (monitoring & indicators) Goal 1 – #2 (Implement Restoration Strategy)	.5 FTE 1 FTE (share w/contam. monitoring) 1 FTE				
Contaminants Sub-committee co-chairs coordinate Goal 2 activities and sub-committees	[Contaminants] Monitoring Gulfwatch Sewage	Goal 1 – #3 and Goal 2 Goal 2 Goal 1 – #3 and Goal 2	1 FTE (share whab. monitoring) present contract for support .5 FTE				
Maritime Activities Sub-committee co-chairs coordinate Goal 3 activities and sub-committees	Bi-valve Shellfish Indus. Energy Sustainable Tourism	Goal 3 Goal 3 Goal 3					

Overarching Context
Indicators and environmental reporting Implements indicators and reporting strategy (1 FTE)
Climate change Provides counsel and implementation on integrating and considering CC issues and initiatives
Ecosystem-based Management

Partnerships
GOM Ocean Data Partnership
Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel
GOMMI

Strategic Alliances
BoFEP
Census for Marine Life
GoMOOS
RARGOM
Place-based Groups (ACAP, NEP, NERR)

Note: The seed-funds the Council provides to support staff is approximate and dependent on the activities the Council pursues on an annual basis.



Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment • Terms of Reference • Draft V.5

Scope

The Governments of Maine, Massachusetts, New Brunswick, New Hampshire, and Nova Scotia established the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment through "*An Agreement on Conservation of the Marine Environment of the Gulf of Maine*" (1989 and amended in June, 1992). The Council discusses and acts on issues that require or significantly benefit from a coordinated regional response. The *Agreement* directs the Council to:

- Coordinate conservation of the Gulf's ecosystem - establish long-term, cooperative environmental management strategies for the states, provinces and federal agencies;
- Promote sustainable development - promote the sustainable development and management of the Gulf's marine and coastal resources,
- Promote public awareness - improve stewardship of the Gulf by engaging decision-makers and the public in the development of progressive responses to leading management issues
- Expand our knowledge-base - improve management of the Gulf by promoting mapping, monitoring, data/information management and research on the structure of the Gulf ecosystem as well as the effects of pollution, habitat loss, and other stresses.

Role

The Council has three primary roles:

- a. Facilitators of integrated watershed, coastal and ocean management – The Council fosters an ecosystem-based management approach. It works to ensure decision-makers possess the necessary information to manage human effects on the ecosystem, to preserve ecological integrity and to sustain economically and socially healthy human communities.
- b. Enable the region's governments be more effective stewards – By working together in a regional forum the states, provinces and federal agencies learn from each other, try new approaches and as a result are better stewards of the resources they are legally responsible for.
- c. Sustain strong partnerships – The Council works to be an effective partner and build the capacity of local and regional organizations that are addressing issues of regional concern.

Membership

Each Governor and Premier appoints two cabinet level or senior level representatives and two non-government representatives from the non-profit and/or business sectors. Canadian and US federal agencies with a statutory mandate pertinent to the *Agreement* may designate a senior representative to serve as a member of the Council.

In addition, the Governors, Premiers, and the Council work collaboratively to make two-year, renewable appointments for representatives of the following interests:

- a. A senior representative of the scientific community from each country that resides in the watershed; and
- b. A member of the tribal community that is nominated by the region's First Nations

Responsibilities

Each Councilor is expected to actively participate in the development and execution of Council meeting agendas including follow-up actions. In addition, Councilors are proponents of regional responses and actively pursue methods to advance the Council's 5-year Action Plan and annual work plan tasks while in their home jurisdiction.

Leadership

Responsibility to chair the Council rotates on an annual basis among the states and provinces. During that year the host jurisdiction serves as the Secretariat.

Meetings

The Council meets at least semi-annually to conduct business at a location and at a time to be determined by the Council. The Chair of the Council, or his/her designee, will moderate the meeting.

Committees

The Council may establish committees as it deems necessary to fulfill its mandate.

Communication

The Council routinely apprises the Premiers, Governors, and others about Council activities and prepares an annual report that documents its accomplishments and remaining challenges.



Support

The Council Coordinator, Policy and Development Coordinator, and the Executive Director of the US Gulf of Maine Association provide the necessary staff support. In addition, other Council contractors, agency representatives, and committee co-chairs assist as needed.

Decisions

The Council will develop, as necessary, a unified consensus on policies and programs affecting its mandate. The Council may decide to vote on specific issues but the results are non-binding on those that oppose or abstain from the decision.

Councilor Advisory Group • Terms of Reference • V.1

Purpose

The Councilor Advisory Group serves the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment (GOMC) and is responsible for providing non-binding advice between Council meetings on:

- a. Implementation activities and evaluation tasks of the Council's five-year Action Plan;
- b. Strategic planning and preparation of policy options;
- c. Organizational and budgetary matters; and
- d. Other tasks assigned to it by the GOMC

It will periodically inform the full Council of its deliberations and advice offered.

Membership

All Council members are encouraged to participate telephonically and electronically in the deliberations of the Councilor Advisory Group. In addition, on an annual basis members may indicate their interest in serving.

Decisions

The Councilor Advisory Group has no independent decision-making authority unless specifically provided by the GOMC.

Gulf of Maine Working Group • Terms of Reference • V.4

Purpose

The Working Group serves the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment (GOMC) and is responsible for the:

- e. Development, implementation and evaluation of the Council's five-year Action Plan; and
- f. Strategic planning and preparation of policy options

Organization

- a. **Membership:** Department / agency Council members shall appoint one representative to the Working Group. The Council may appoint additional members by consensus of its members. In addition, each Council committee shall designate a committee Co-chair that will serve as a member of the Working Group.
- b. **Qualifications:** Representatives of the Working Group shall:
 - Have the authority to represent the position of their agency and make decisions (e.g. recommendations for the Council on policies, work plans, and other elements of the Council's work, etc.); and
 - Work directly with his/her Councilor to brief him/her.
- c. **Chair:** The Working Group Chair will be a member of the Working Group and from the jurisdiction in which the Council Chair is located. The Chair, in consultation with the Secretariat and Management and Finance, will set meeting agendas, and conduct other business as appropriate.
- d. **Meetings:** The Working Group will meet at least three times annually. These meetings may be coincidental with the Council's semi-annual meetings. Locations of the meetings will be rotated among the member jurisdictions.

Decisions: Decisions will be made by consensus.

Management and Finance • Terms of Reference • V.3

Purpose

Management and Finance (M&F) serves the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment by managing and reporting on the Council's programmatic, personnel, finance, and budget directives.



- Programmatic – M&F takes the lead and works closely with the Council, Working Group and Committees to develop and implement annual work plans that implement the 5-Year Action Plan. It oversees all related contract procurement procedures (e.g., Requests for Proposals, contract negotiations, contract reviews, etc.) including external and internal budget decisions.

It facilitates inter-committee coordination, establishes and monitors implementation of Council procedures (e.g., Reference Handbook, etc.), and coordinates internal policy. It organizes Council and Working Group meetings as needed including the development of agendas and reporting out of the results. It seeks to secure funding in support of approved Council initiatives and projects.

- Personnel – M&F is responsible to the Council for all contractor/personnel decisions. In doing so it will delegate appropriate authority to the committees, ensure they have adequate support to perform this work and will make recommendations to the Council as needed.
- Finance and Budget – M&F prepares the annual budget for Council and Working Group review and then oversees its implementation. (It can amend the budget if the changes do not cumulatively exceed 10% of the approved budget.)

Membership

Management and Finance is composed of a representative designated by each state and province, one provincial member at-large and one federal representative from each country. The current Working Group chair serves as chair.

Support

The Council Coordinator, Policy & Development Coordinator, and the Executive Director of the US Gulf of Maine Association provide the necessary staff support. In addition, other Council contractors, agency representatives, and committee co-chairs will assist as needed.

Decisions

Decisions will be made by consensus.

Gulf of Maine Council Committee Structure

Standing Committees & Subcommittees

Description – These are formally established by the Council and have a general set of on-going responsibilities established in a Terms of Reference that are approved by the Council. They develop an annual work plan that is approved by the Council and they report on their progress on a bi-annual basis. They may be provided resources by the Council to discharge their duties (e.g., funding, staff assistance, etc.) and are encouraged to secure other sources of funding consistent with their work plan.

Decision-making – Standing committees and subcommittees are empowered to make the decisions required to implement their annual work plan. It is expected they will also make recommendations to the Council on substantive policy and programmatic issues.

To make a decision at least 50% of the committee must be present. To approve a decision all of those present should be able to accept the decision. In the event consensus cannot be attained a super-majority of 75% in attendance is required.

Communication – Canadian and US committee co-chairs will serve on the Working Group as a way to integrate the Council activities and to ensure effective communication among the committees. Committees will record their discussions and decisions and make them available electronically.

Participation & meetings – The Council periodically reviews the membership to ensure appropriate geographic distribution and expertise, installs new members and accepts resignations, and designates the co-chairs (one from Canada and one from the US). The chair of the Working Group is an ex-officio member of all committees. It is anticipated the committees will meet periodically in-person or by teleconference to conduct their business. (They will meet no less frequently than once a year.)

Advisory Boards

Description – These are created by the Council to analyze situations, identify opportunities and constraints, develop options and recommendations. They are time-limited in duration (e.g., 12-months) and can be affirmatively renewed for a succeeding period by the Council.



Decision-making – Advisory boards only make recommendations to Council in areas of expertise for Council review and consideration. Final decisions remain the prerogative of the Council.

Participation & meetings – The Council designates participants with the necessary skills and expertise. They may add or remove individuals at any time. Boards will meet at times and locations as needed.

Collaborations

Description – These are strategic alliances the Council chooses to participate in as a means to implement its 5-year Action Plan. Collaborations will commonly bring together diverse interests with a shared purpose to accomplish tasks they cannot do by themselves. These tasks can range from administrative and policy coordination to joint programming, project management and budgeting. They are recorded in Agreements that the organizations approve and periodically assess.

Decision-making – Participating organizations are making a non-binding commitment to continue, for the foreseeable future, in shared decision-making without any formal changes to the structure of their organizations. The Council retains and exercises its ability to influence decisions made by the alliance through its representatives.

Participation and meetings – The Council designates individuals with the necessary skills and expertise to represent the Council's interests, provides instructions to them and asks them to report on progress and issues that require Council attention. They may add or remove these individuals at any time.

Proposed Council Response to NEGC/ECP Oceans Working Committee

Background

In August 2005 the New England Governors Conference/ Eastern Canadian Premiers (NEGC/ECP) formed by Resolution 29-3 (Resolution Concerning Oceans) the Oceans Working Committee consisting of representatives of the Northeast Regional Ocean Council and individuals from the five eastern Canadian provinces. Their broad charge was "... to expand and enhance regional efforts on all ocean related issues."

In May 2006 NEGC/ECP released Resolution 30-1 that directs the Ocean Working Committee to focus its efforts in the short-term on finalizing prioritization of regional issues including those related to:

- Marine and ocean-related research and development, education, exploration, observation, oceans management and security;
- Invasive species, disease identification and control and environment factors; and
- Partnerships and synergies to facilitate existing initiatives such as the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment and encourage new initiatives and partnerships.

The Oceans Working Committee was directed to develop a long-term strategy to explore regional ocean governance issues such as:

- Monitoring and management actions to assess effectiveness of addressing regional ocean priorities; and
- Data sharing, technology development, and coordinated funding strategies;

Further, the Committee was directed with work with federal agencies to formulate a regional ocean plan and implementation strategy.

In December 2005 the Gulf of Maine Council discussed ways that it can effectively interact with the Oceans Working Committee in the context of the Council's 2006-2011 Action Plan. It reiterated the importance of working only on issues that "require and significantly benefit from a regional response". In this context it indicated that the development and implementation of ocean management tools (e.g., monitoring, research, data management, ocean observing, public education, benthic habitat mapping, etc.) for this larger ecosystem (e.g., Gulf of St. Lawrence to Long Island Sound) might benefit from regional collaboration. The benefits might be enhanced efficiencies (e.g., time, cost, technologies, etc.) .

Recommendation

It is timely to recommend a specific initiative to the Oceans Working Committee that advances ecosystem-based approaches to management – a core theme in the 2006-2011 Action Plan. Attached is a draft letter for consideration by the Council.

Submitted by David Keeley, Policy and Development Coordinator

Climate Change Network Task Force

Since meeting with the GoM Working Group in January 2006, Task Force co-Chairs, Mr. Gary Lines, Science Manager with the Climate Change Section, Environment Canada, and Mr. Bill Burtis, Communications Lead, Clean Air-Cool Planet have been examining ways to inform Gulf of Maine proponents on climate change impacts and develop a Climate Change Network to help accomplish that task.

Two projects are in the process of being completed that speak to these objectives. The first project is to combine the datasets of Canadian and US climate records to produce a Gulf of Maine region-based set of **climate change indicators**. This work is seen as a critical first step to better inform Gulf of Maine proponents on the impacts of climate change. It is also intended to support the effort to provide the Ecosystem Indicator Partnership with relevant climate change indicators. A completed document for these indicators is expected later in June 2006.

The second project was to hold a Meeting of **climate change “practitioners”** to reach consensus on the way ahead for a “climate change network” or other mechanism that would allow delivery of climate change information to Gulf of Maine proponents. The Meeting was held on 22&23 March 2006 and a Meeting Report has been completed, including recommendations for Gulf of Maine WG and Council. The report and recommendations will be submitted and briefed on at the June 5&6 Working Group Meetings in Portland, Maine. As part of this project an Outreach Plan will be developed that maximizes outreach opportunities to deliver climate change impact information to coastal communities.

In conjunction with these two projects, the Task Force has been very active in the development of climate change activities as they relate to specific Action Plan Goals and Outcomes. Activities have been identified against all three goals and been submitted through various working groups to be included in the Action Plan recommendations to Council.

Future Activities

The Task Force intends to proceed with several significant pieces of work over the next 1 to 3 years.

1. Secure support from the Working Group and Council on recommendations from the Climate Change Meeting and develop a climate change network as specified.
2. Deliver on the noted activities as approved by GOMC in the Action Plan 2006-11.
3. Continue Indicator work as it pertains to commitments with ESIP.

In order to do so, resources will be required. The Task Force intends to utilize current funding opportunities, such as agreements through the Ocean Action Plan, as well as Internal Grant funding to facilitate delivery on these items.

The Task Force will continue to seek Working Group and Council approval for this important work over the next 1-3 years.

Submitted by Gary Lines, Environment Canada and Climate Change Network Task Force co-chair



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Value in Dollars

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